

Compete Together

There is something about the thrill of competition. The sweat, the hustle, the effort that comes with doing your best. The joy of victory, the challenge of falling behind, the support of a team and the encouragement of a cheering crowd.

Behind it all - there is achievement.

SOKS provides the opportunity to experience it all with training and competition opportunities in 20 Olympic-type sports to almost 5,000 individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ID), ages 8 and above across the state regardless of gender or ability.

The physical, emotional and social benefits of participation in Special Olympics are experienced both on and off the playing field.

- Physical exercise positively impacts health, mood and anxiety.
- Emphasis on sports training helps athletes maintain a healthy weight.
- Athletes participate in activities that enhance their self-esteem and instill pride.
- Athletes have many opportunities to make new friends and socialize in an environment that is accepting and encouraging.
- Travel opportunities allow athletes to gain experiences and skills that positively impact all areas of their lives.



Sports Offered

alpine skiing
athletics
basketball
bocce
bowling
cheerleading
cross-country skiing
cycling
figure skating
flag football
floor hockey
golf
powerlifting
snowshoeing
soccer
softball
speed skating
swimming
tennis
volleyball

Make an Impact

SOKS depends upon the financial support and dedication of individuals, organizations and corporations to help those with ID get out and experience the joys that sport can provide.

Volunteers are the backbone of SOKS. People from all walks of life dedicate their time and knowledge; they coach and train athletes, assist with fundraising activities, organize events and much more.

Together, we are empowered and inspired by the achievements of our athletes!

ID a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle along with the opportunity to experience the excitement, joy and personal fulfillment associated with sports training and competition.

When volunteers leave a SOKS event, they know they have touched the lives of other people in a meaningful way. Participation will make a difference in both your life and the lives of others.

Achieve More

Athlete Leadership Programs (ALPs) train athletes to serve in meaningful leadership roles outside that of "competitor." Such participation might come in the form of an athlete serving on the Board of Directors or local organizing committee; or it might find an athlete as a spokesperson, team captain, coach or official. The ALP's Global Messenger program focuses on public speaking skills and trains athletes to speak on behalf of SOKS in the community.

SOKS Purpose

Special Olympics Kansas is dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive and respected members of society through sports competitions, health and nutrition programs and leadership development. Offering year-round initiatives to children and adults with intellectual disabilities, Special Olympics Kansas is a platform for acceptance and inclusion as well as one of the largest advocates for healthy lifestyles in the state – regardless of race, religion, ethnicity or cultural differences.

Created by The Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities.



Create Joy

The Young Athletes Program™ is an innovative sports program which provides a foundation for intellectually disabled children, ages 3-7, to enter the world of sports while welcoming family members to the Special Olympics support network.



Utilizing 1 hour "play opportunities" the young children rotate between activity stations that focus on the basics that are crucial to cognitive development. They participate in physical activities that develop motor skills and hand-eye coordination, and learn to apply these skills (kicking, catching, throwing etc.).

Improve Health

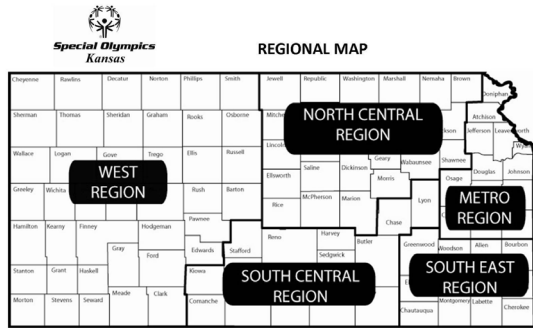
The Healthy Athletes Program is aimed at improving, through better health and fitness, each athlete's ability to train and compete in Special Olympics. It provides health-care screenings and testing to Special Olympics athletes at no cost in the following disciplines:

Healthy Hearing, Health Promotion, FitFeet, Opening Eyes, and Special Smiles.



Regions in Kansas

Special Olympics Kansas is divided into five regions across the state. A regional director guides all Special Olympics' activities within their region, including training, competition, fundraising, public relations, outreach and volunteer relations.



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Come Together

Family members of SOKS athletes are offered an opportunity to discover a community of sharing and caring friends who join them in celebrating the achievements of their loved ones.

SOKS believes in the bright futures of our athletes. Together we can help break down social barriers by demonstrating that persons with intellectual disabilities are able to function both physically and socially. Together, we can realize the goal of bringing all persons with intellectual disabilities into a community where they are accepted, respected, and productive citizens.

It is about changing attitudes, promoting inclusion and providing quality sporting events where athletes and community volunteers are able to interact freely in hopes that one day this attitude of inclusion and acceptance will spread to the broader community.

The experiences shared by athletes, coaches, families, volunteers, sponsors and spectators are among the most valued moments you can imagine. The smiles on the athletes' faces as they participate, and the sense of accomplishment and joy as they receive their medals, are what make the fundraising and volunteer efforts worthwhile.

Together, we will achieve.

Energized by the pride and power of teamwork, Special Olympics Kansas provides individuals with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to be an athlete... and more... through acceptance, inclusion, physical fitness, health and nutrition programs, and leadership development.

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**Special
Olympics**
Kansas



SOKS

**"Let me win.
But if I cannot win,
let me be brave in the
attempt."**

-Athlete Oath